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Letter dated 12 April 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to our letter dated 28 April 2016 (A/70/855-S/2016/406), I am writing to express our grave concern regarding the provocative act by the Greek Cypriot Administration to grant an offshore hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation licence for the so-called "Block 6" that partially falls within the outer limits of Turkey's continental shelf in the eastern Mediterranean.

I would like to recall that the outer limits of Turkey's continental shelf in the eastern Mediterranean that are west of longitude 32°16'18"E were defined in Turkish notes verbales No. 2004/Turkuno DT/4739, dated 2 March 2004, and No. 2013/14136816/22273, dated 12 March 2013.

In the light of the above, I would like to emphasize that the so-called offshore licence granted by the Greek Cypriot Administration for "Block 6" on 6 April 2017 bears no legal effect on Turkey's ipso facto and ab initio sovereign rights over its continental shelf for the purposes of exploration and exploitation of its natural resources.

I would like to reiterate that Turkey is committed to protecting its sovereign rights emanating from international law and will not allow foreign companies to conduct unauthorized hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation activities on its continental shelf, as it was strongly underlined in several statements on the issue by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, most recently on 6 April 2017.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 73 (a), and of the Security Council, and published on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as well as in the next *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative

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